

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

PRESS RELEASE

Santo Domingo, D.R.

Tel. (809) 566-3131

Fax: (809) 381-0066/381-0062



December 1, 2001

U.S. GOVERNMENT INAUGURATES ACUEDUCT IN SANTA ELENA, BARAHONA AND CELEBRATES WORLD'S AIDS DAY

BARAHONA – The government of the United States of America through its Agency for International Development (USAID), along with the American Red Cross, Dominican Red Cross, the Dominican government and the residents of Santa Elena, inaugurated an aqueduct with an estimated cost of RD\$850,000 guaranteeing permanent potable water. Also, celebrating World's AIDS day, USAID announced that RD\$211,155,417.00 have been funded as a response to those prevention and assistance programs on HIV/AIDS.

The aqueduct is now a reality thanks to the hard work and dedication of the community members of Santa Elena, who worked digging trenches and burying pipes. Likewise, they organized a water committee and the community was trained on the proper use of their new water system. The community has agreed to pay their water monthly bill, which will guarantee its maintenance.

This project is part of the U. S. Response in the aftermath of Hurricane Georges, benefiting over 250 communities affected in 1998.

In this reconstruction program managed by the American and Dominican Red Cross, 5 water systems and 825 latrines were rebuilt, 44 health promoters were trained and 30 newly built oral rehydration units to treat children with diarrhea.

During the ceremony, Ms. Elena Brineman, USAID Director, also celebrated World's AIDS day, pointing out that HIV/AIDS and needed water are major challenges in the Dominican Republic and its communities. She invited the entire community of Santa Elena to take advantage of this experience gained through solving the water problem to take action, as a community, to face the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Since 1999, USAID has financed projects on prevention and attention of HIV/AIDS for RD\$211,155,417.00 to fight this disease. An estimated 2.5% of the adult population or 170,000 Dominicans are HIV positive.

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

PRESS RELEASE



Attending the inauguration were Ms. Elena Brineman, USAID Director, Ms. Melissa Quimby, American Red Cross representative and Mrs. Ligia Leroux, Dominican Red Cross representative. Ms. Elena Brineman congratulated the participating organizations for a job well done in Santa Elena, as well as the community itself.